REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 3-14, 16, 17 and 19-55 remain in the application for further prosecution. Claims 2, 15 and 18 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 9, 14, 17, 27-31, 33, 40-42, 44 and 47 have been amended.

Drawings

The Applicants submit herewith revised FIGS. 1A, 2A, 3A, 5A, 6A, 6B, 7A, 7B, 7C, 7D, 8A, 8B, 8C, 8D and 9. No new matter has been added to FIGS. 1A, 2A, 3A, 5A, 6A, 6B, 7A, 7B, 7C, 7D, 8A, 8B, 8C, 8D and 9.

§ 112 Rejection

Claims 26-30, 33, 34 and 37-55 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention.

Claims 26-30, 33, 37, 39-43, 47 and 51-54 were rejected for use of the term "generally." The Applicants respectfully disagree that this term is indefinite. Relative terminology is acceptable, so long as one of ordinary skill in the art would understand what is claimed in view of the specification. MPEP § 2173.05(b). The term "generally," as used in these claims, describes the shape of various parts of the invention (the waveguide, the waveguide flange, etc. . .). One having ordinary skill in the art would understand that the term "generally" is a relative term. For this reason, the term "generally," as used in these claims, is believed to be allowable.

Per the Examiner's suggestion, claims 27-31, 33, 40-42, 44 and 47 have been amended to replace the term "formed" with "disposed."

§ 102 Rejections

Independent claim 1 recites a waveguide adaptor assembly including an adaptor and a flange. Claim 1 has been amended to (1) include the limitation from claim 2 that the flange is selected from a library of flanges, and (2) recite that the "flange coupling interface is configured to mate with any of said different standard flange interfaces."

Independent claim 9 is directed to an adaptor that "connects to a flange selected from a library of flanges adapted for different standard flange interfaces, wherein said flange coupling interface is configured to mate with any of said different standard flange interfaces."

Independent claim 17 is directed to a combination including a structure having a standard flange interface and a waveguide adaptor assembly for coupling a waveguide to the flange interface. The waveguide adaptor assembly includes an adaptor and a flange, the flange being selected from a library of flanges adapted for different standard flange interfaces. The adaptor includes a flange coupling interface which "is configured to mate with any of said different standard flange interfaces."

All of these independent claims include the limitation that the flange coupling interface is configured to mate with any of the different standard flange interfaces.

U.S. Patent No. 3,500,264 to Floyd, Jr. ("Floyd") is directed to a connection means for a waveguide that includes a clamping member 30 and a flange member 21. The clamping member 30 includes a flange 37 that is adapted to be disposed within an opening of the clamping member 30. Column 4, lines 6-24. Floyd does not disclose a plurality of different flange members or a clamping member that has a flange coupling interface configured to mate with any of the different standard flange interfaces. The Examiner stated that because the end product results in

a single standard flange, Floyd meets the limitations of the claims. The Applicants respectfully disagree. These independent claims have been amended to recite that the single flange is chosen from a library of different flanges and that the flange coupling interface must be configured to mate with any of the standard flange interfaces in the library. Floyd, by its teaching of a single flange, does not disclose a flange coupling interface that is capable of mating with different flanges. Thus, for at least this reason, these independent claims and the claims which depend from them are now believed to be allowable over Floyd.

Independent claim 14 recites a library of flanges having a flange interface side and an opposed side configured to mate with an adaptor. Claim 14 has been amended to recite that, for each flange, the opposed side has "a provision common to all flanges in said library which is configured to mate with said adaptor."

As stated above, Floyd does not recite a library of flanges. Furthermore, Floyd does not teach a library of flanges, such that each flange has an opposed side including a provision that is common to all flanges. Because Floyd only teaches a single flange, it does not teach using a single provision on a plurality of different flanges. Therefore, for at least this reason, independent claim 14 and the claims which depend therefrom are believed to be allowable over Floyd.

Independent claims 25 and 37 recite a system for coupling one of a plurality of waveguide flanges to a waveguide, wherein the system has a flange adaptor, the flange adaptor having inner and outer surfaces, wherein "the outer surface is adapted to engage said generally common internal mating configuration of said waveguide flanges." As stated above, Floyd discloses a system that includes a single flange member. There is nothing in Floyd that teaches a common

internal mating configuration of the flange member, because there is no other flange member for the internal mating to be common to. Thus, nothing in Floyd discloses an outer surface that engages the common internal mating configuration. For at least the reason that this limitation of independent claims 25 and 37 has not been met, these claims (and their dependents) are believed to be allowable over Floyd.

Independent claim 51 is directed to a method for coupling one of a plurality of waveguide flanges to a waveguide. The method comprises forming a flange adapter with inner and outer surfaces, such that the outer surface is "adapted to engage said generally common internal mating configuration of said waveguide flanges." At least for the reason stated above with reference to claims 25 and 37, it is the Applicants' belief that Floyd does not disclose forming a flange adaptor that can engage the generally common internal mating configuration of the waveguide flanges. Thus, for at least this reason, independent claim 51 and its dependents are believed to be allowable over Floyd.

§ 103 Rejections

Claims 28 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Floyd.

Dependent claims 28 and 41 ultimately depend from independent claims 25 and 37. Therefore, these claims include the limitation that "the outer surface is adapted to engage said generally common internal mating configuration of said waveguide flanges." As stated above, in reference to these independent claims, Floyd does not disclose such a limitation. Saad does not teach or suggest such a limitation. For at least this reason, dependent claims 28 and 41 are believed to be allowable over the combination of Floyd and Saad.

Conclusion

It is the Applicants' belief that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance and action towards that effect is respectfully requested.

If there are any matters which may be resolved or clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the number indicated.

Respectfully submitted,

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Cynthia K. Thompson
Reg. No. 48,655
Jenkens & Gilchrist
225 West Washington Street, Suite 2600
Chicago, IL 60606-3418
(312) 425-3900
Attorney for Applicants